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In the early part of January 1951, an order was issued by the
chief of the HVA pertaining to discipline within the Volkspolizei
units. The first part of the order consisted of a detailed re-
port of conditions found in the various units at the end of
December 1950, by inspection teams checking on the preparations
for the January training program.

1. In general it was found that the units were not properly pre-
pared for the new training period beginning 2 January 1951. The
leaders of the various units were held at fault. They had not
given sufficient attention to the new conditions arising out of
the recent reorganization (i.e., new staffs, young and inexperienced
officers, increase of personnel). Many of the men recently trans-
ferred were not properly absorbed into their new units, but were
merely allowed to fend for themselves. The chiefs of the units
had been issuing orders without any concrete knowledge of what was
going on within the units.

2. In particular, the following criticisms were cited:

a. The training instructions had not been worked out on paper;
instruction schedules, room schedules, equipment schedules and
training programs had not been set up, or were incomplete.

In Erfurt (VPD 2425, Inspekteur Smolara), the training instruc-
tions were released on 29 December 1950, at the instigation of
the inspection committee. They had been drawn up by 22 December
1950, but had not been passed on to the lower echelons.

In Prenzlau (VPD 1213, Inspekteur Paul Markgraf), on 28 December 1950,
the chief of staff had not even started to work out the training
program; he was still receiving orders from the HVA.

All units, except the school at Pirna (VPD 1702), the school at
Prinnewald (VPD 1360), the units at Rostock (VPD 1411), Gera
(VPD 2247), Meiningen (VPD 2735), Halle (VPD 2915), and Leipzig I
(2311), were to some extent unprepared for the January training
period.

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25 YEAR RE-REVIEW

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b. The setting up of systematic instruction was limited in most cases to a general officer discussion. Concrete plans for methodical instruction in the various branches of training were lacking.

Good examples were set at the school at Pirna (VPD 1702), and the units at Gotha (VPD 2942), Halle (VPD 2915) and Kochstedt (VPD 1844) where teaching instruction was being given, and a special training course for the officer-instructors had been set up.

In Erfurt (VPD 2425), the special unit "seven" had a good training program, but the leaders were not able to recognize this and encourage the other sections to follow suit.

In Quedlinburg (VPD 1293, Kommandeur Waniek), the instructions to organize training programs were not followed up.

c. The training directors showed little initiative in the preparation of visual instruction material, despite the fact that the necessary money, time and personnel were available. Besides this, in most cases the preparation of instruction material was begun so late that it could not possibly have been ready for the beginning of the training period.

In Zeithain (VPD 2155), (Kommandeur Schneider), the training material had not even been unpacked.

In Eggesin (VPD 1152, Kommandeur Kunath), instruction in the use of the field compass was being given as late as 4 January 1951, with no field compass for demonstration purposes.

In Erfurt (VPD 2425), Oberrat Peter showed considerable initiative in preparing training material for sections one and seven.

d. The officers, especially the younger officers, had not been properly apprized of their duties.

In Frankenberg (VPD 3314, Inspekteur Hermann Rentzsch) and Grossenhain (VPD 1916, Kommandeur Gebauer), the section leaders and group leaders were not given sufficient instruction in their jobs. In Erfurt (VPD 2425) none of the Kommando leaders knew what duties they were to assume on 2 January 1951.

At the school in Naumburg (VPD 0826) Kommandeur Obst was surprised to find that the platoon leaders had not yet received their assignments as he had issued several assignments in writing.

e. Poor internal discipline was noticeable, particularly in Erfurt (VPD 2425), where the entire daily program was disorganized. (No morning roll call after reveille; many persons, including officers, in bed until noon; assigned work not carried out; no seats for noon meal; no lighting, even though 900 light-bulbs were available so that no control over the coming and going at the morning and evening meal was possible.)

In Eggesin (VPD 1152) no organized system of duties was in operation. The units moved into the dining rooms when they felt like it.

f. The present poor discipline now seen in the Volkspolizei units in this crass form is the fault of the cowardliness of the majority of the young officers. The leaders of the units did not recognize that it was necessary for the officers, from the very beginning, to have a clear picture of what was expected of an officer in the way of maintaining discipline, and how he was to behave toward his subordinates. This omission has led to undisciplined and flagrantly bad behavior in public, overstaying of furloughs, fighting, and even refusal to obey orders and commands. In Gera (VPD 2247, Kommandeur Fluhr), the head of training of the fourth Kommando, Polizei-Rat Endter, actually allowed the men to vote on the question of discipline in the Volkspolizei.

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In Meiningen (VPD 2735, Kommandeur Bisewski), a group supported by their section chief, refused to peel potatoes.

In the school at Kietz (VPD 0932, Inspekteur Welz), the duty officer left the guard house without authorization, and took a guard with him to the movies in the town.

In Eggesin (VPD 1152), an Oberkommissar in charge of an IP detail was assaulted by non-commissioned officers.

Members of the same unit beat up a barber in his shop because he refused to serve them ahead of their turn.

The chief of the Volkspolizei unit in Zeithain (VPD 2155), Kommandeur Schneider, was irresponsible in taking his vacation at the same time as most of the staff officers and all the Kommando and special unit leaders. This irresponsibility on the part of the leaders caused much undisciplined behavior in the unit.

g. The Polit/Kultur work in all units had been limited to political lectures, distributing political information, and forming elementary Party units. These Party units are not yet organized.

For the most part there were no work plans for organizing the new training programs. In general there was no instruction organized for the men who would have to implement the new training program. The Party program had been worked out only superficially. At the school at Doebein (VPD 1108), Polizei-Rat Hahn, who had received a Party assignment on 28 December 1950 to be completed by 4 January 1951, merely postponed the suspense date in his own handwriting by 24 days, and put the document aside.

h. The poor morale in many Volkspolizei units has often been the fault of poor organization, laxness in requiring the carrying out of duties, as well as in not giving the men enough work to occupy themselves. In some cases because of insufficient supervision, destructive elements were able to influence the morale negatively; as for instance in Grossenhain (VPD 1916) by smuggling in pornographic literature.

In the school at Gütten (VPD 2097, Chefinspekteur Rudolf (?) Bamler), pacifist tendencies were observed that found their expression in the following remarks by the students:

"We are being trained for war, because the artillery is ready"
 "We are aggressive because we have the weapons"
 "The head of this school is a fascist general"

Negative elements worked particularly against newly appointed officers, playing on their uncertainty and lack of experience. Although these facts have been showing up since the beginning of the reorganization, insufficient action was taken by the PK staff, and the members of the Party and FDJ.

At the school in Pirna (VPD 1702, Kommandeur Bernhard Fischer), it was found that because of the intensive training of all of the staff and officer candidates, as well as because of the clear assignment of duties, a good spirit prevailed and a real pleasure in work was observed.

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